



etbi

Education and Training
Boards Ireland

*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*

DRAFT

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

CONSULTATION PHASE

of

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION

in Extenuating Circumstances

Drafted by:

ETBI National Assessment Procedures Handbook Working Group

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Compassionate Consideration

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1. Key Terms in this Document

1.1. Relevant Evidence/Documentation for Compassionate Consideration

1. *Statement from the learner (or someone on behalf of the learner)* outlining reason for application for compassionate consideration

and

2. *Statement from a qualified professional practitioner*

Examples of statements from a qualified professional practitioner necessary for consideration of compassionate consideration include:

- Statement from medical practitioner/health professional
- Statement from An Garda Síochána
- Statement from registered counsellor/psychotherapist or other relevant practitioner
- Statement from a psychologist
- Statement from Religious/Cultural Leader
- Statement from Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager (in exceptional cases, the Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality.

All evidence must be on headed paper and must be legible, stamped and dated.

All evidence must relate to the specific application for extenuating circumstances being made.

or

- *Death Certificate/RIP.ie details*

2. Principles of Assessment in Relation to Compassionate Consideration

Assessment is underpinned by the **principles of assessment** including the ***fair*** principle (equal opportunity for all learners) and ***consistent*** principle (consistency in approach to assessment across providers¹, programmes and modules). As such, in order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to the compassionate consideration. The provider's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure *fairness* and *consistency* across all assessment activities, learners may be allowed, where appropriate, to apply for compassionate consideration in relation to their assessment. Such compassionate consideration could include deferring an assessment activity or providing an extension to an assessment deadline and will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. These circumstances must be evidenced by appropriate evidence/documentation (see 1.1). In these circumstances, the learner must not be unfairly disadvantaged as a result of exceptional circumstances. Furthermore, the learner must not gain significant advantage when compared with other learners.

¹ Note from Working Group: Agreement is needed on this term

3. Definition of Compassionate Consideration

Definition: The Programme Co-ordinator can enable learners who:

- **having been prevented from undertaking a specific assessment activity** because of exceptional circumstances, to apply to defer the assessment, i.e. to be allowed to complete the assessment activity on another occasion.

or

- **feeling their performance has been seriously impaired** because of exceptional circumstances, to apply to repeat the assessment, i.e. to be allowed to repeat the assessment activity on another occasion. In exceptional circumstances, a learner may feel that his/her performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, relevant evidence/documentation must support the application (see 1.1). The application is then processed and either granted or declined. Where the application has been declined, the original result of the assessment will apply.

Examples of circumstances under which a provider may **consider** giving compassionate consideration to the learner include but are not limited to:

- physical injury or emotional trauma during a period four to six weeks previously
- physical disability or chronic or disabling condition such as epilepsy, glandular fever, severe effects of pregnancy or other incapacitating illness of the learner
- recent bereavement of close family member or friend
- personal injury certified by a medical practitioner
- domestic crisis
- serious mental health issue
- serious illness of a close family member
- serious illness of child or other family member for whom the learner is sole carer
- other extenuating circumstances

Examples of circumstances which are **unlikely to be considered** include but are not limited to:

- typical symptoms associated with exam stress (e.g. anxiety, sleeping disturbances, etc.)
- minor illnesses such as a common cold
- holidays
- IT and/or computer failure
- English is not the first language of the learner

Any application in relation to compassionate consideration requires the learner to provide relevant evidence/documentation (see 1.1) of the extenuating circumstances.

4. Compassionate Consideration Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. The Programme Co-ordinator

- The Programme Co-ordinator is required to ensure all Learning Practitioners are made aware of their roles in relation to planning, conducting and concluding assessment (Tutor Handbook). In the request for compassionate consideration, the Programme Co-ordinator is responsible for the management of the application process.

4.2. The Learning Practitioner

- The Learning Practitioner is required to inform learners of assessment deadlines in advance (Learning Practitioner Handbook guidelines). Where a learner misses an assessment deadline, the Learning Practitioner should **not** accept assessment evidence after that date and should inform the learner of the compassionate consideration process in which he/she can engage.
- In the request for compassionate consideration, the Learning Practitioner is required to inform and meet² with the Programme Co-ordinator in order to process the learner application.

4.3. The Learner

- The learner is required to keep up-to-date with relevant assessment deadlines and consequences for missing same (e.g. Learner Handbook, Notices etc.).
- In the event of extenuating circumstances, the learner (or someone on behalf of the learner) is required to apply in writing for compassionate consideration (to the Programme Co-ordinator).
- The learner is required to provide relevant evidence/documentation (see 1.1) of the extenuating circumstances which prevented or may prevent him/her from undertaking a specific assessment activity, or seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance in an assessment, in order to be considered to complete the assessment activity on another occasion. This must be provided within a reasonable timeframe after the assessment deadline (no more than 2 weeks³).

² In the case of Outreach or Distance Learning Programmes, the Learning Practitioner may be unable to meet with the Programme Co-ordinator and as such may communicate via phone and/or email.

³ In exceptional cases, the Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager may extend this date due to the specific circumstances which may prevent the learner from obtaining the relevant evidence/documentation within the allowed timeframe.

5. Compassionate Consideration Procedure

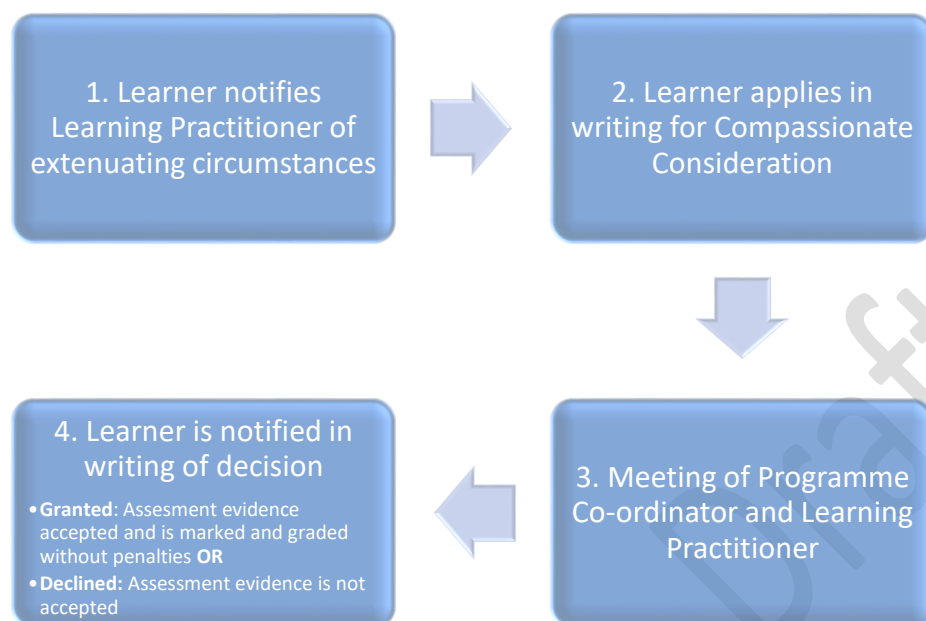


Figure 1.1 Compassionate Consideration Procedure

1. The learner notifies the Learning Practitioner of the extenuating circumstances which may have prevented or may prevent him/her (or seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance) from either:
 - **completing** an assessment activity (Learner Record, Collection of Work, Project, Assignment or Skills Demonstration), or
 - **missing** an assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration).

The Learning Practitioner informs the learner of Compassionate Consideration policy and procedure. The learner (or someone on behalf of the learner) **applies in writing for compassionate consideration** (to the Programme Co-ordinator) within a reasonable timeframe. This application **MUST** be supported with relevant evidence/documentation (see 1.1) and must state the **exceptional circumstances** that occurred. The learner should complete the *Compassionate Consideration Application Form*.

2. A meeting between the Programme Co-ordinator and the Learning Practitioner is arranged to discuss the application and decide on the outcome.

The Programme Co-ordinator and Learning Practitioner must judge each application for compassionate consideration or extenuating circumstances on its own merits.

In the event of extenuating circumstances, considerations include:

- Details of extenuating circumstances
- Severity of circumstances
- Application from learner
- Evidence
- Nature of the assessment activity (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work, Skills Demonstration and Examination)

- Previous learner engagement with the programme (if applicable)
- 3. The learner is informed in writing (or other appropriate format) of the outcome of the meeting, successful or otherwise (within 24 hours and not more than three (3) working days).
 - **Granted:**
 - If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been **granted**, the revised schedule for the assessment activity is agreed between the Learning Practitioner and the learner. Every attempt to facilitate this in the current assessment period will be made. However, due to time constraints, and/or resources, this revised schedule may roll into a subsequent certification period.
 - Opportunities to repeat or reschedule an assessment activity are dependent on the nature of the activity and the practical and/or operational issues involved. It is acknowledged that there may be specific constraints on providers which prevent them from offering repeat or rescheduled assessment opportunities to learners.
 - **Examination/Skills Demonstration:** Where the application is successful, in the event that the assessment activity is an examination, please note that a new examination paper, marking scheme and set of outline solutions is devised. The original examination paper will not be re-used.
 - **Learner Evidence (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work and Skills Demonstration):** Where the application is successful, the learner evidence is accepted by the Programme Co-ordinator/Learning Practitioner and **should be marked and graded in accordance with the standards for the award**. The actual marks and grade awarded are determined solely on the basis of the evidence submitted in accordance with the standards for the award. **There is no mark/grade penalty under this procedure.**
 - **Declined:**
 - If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has **declined**, the Programme Co-ordinator/Learning Practitioner will refuse to accept the assessment evidence from the learner (Levels 4-6). The learner may appeal this.

6. Compassionate Consideration Appeals

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to compassionate consideration. Appeals must be made within 24 hours of the decision. (In exceptional circumstances, the Programme Co-ordinator may extend this). All appeals must be made in writing using the Appeals Application Form (see Appendix 3). The Appeals process is processed by the relevant line manager and in line with ETB appeals procedures.

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Appendix 1: Statement from Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager

In exceptional cases, the Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality.

To be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager

| | |
|---|--|
| Programme Co-ordinator or Centre Manager Name: | |
| Learner Name: | |
| Course: | |
| Module: | |
| Declaration: | |
| I can confirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ There are confidential extenuating circumstances which pertain to this learner which have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ prevented him/her from undertaking a specific assessment activityor○ seriously impaired his/her performance⁴ | |
| Signed: | |
| Date: | |

⁴ In exceptional circumstances, a learner may feel that their performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, **relevant evidence/documentation** must support the application (see 1.1) and the application for same must be **granted**. Where the application has **not** been granted, the original result of the assessment will apply.

Appendix 2: Compassionate Consideration Application Form

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COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPLICATION FORM

| Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner | |
|--|---|
| Centre Name: | |
| Learner Name: | |
| Learner Address: | |
| Date of Birth: | |
| Course: | |
| Module: | |
| Tutor/Learning Practitioner: | |
| Types of Assessment: | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> Examination <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Record <input type="checkbox"/> Collection of Work <input type="checkbox"/> </div> </div> |
| Assessment Due Date: | |
| Reasons for requiring the extension: | |
| | |
| Supporting relevant evidence/documentation included (see 1.1) <i>Supporting relevant evidence/documentation must be included in your application</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation: | |
| | |
| Signed: | |
| Date: | |

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPLICATION FORM

| Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator | |
|--|--|
| Programme Co-ordinator Name: | |
| Receipt date of application: | |
| Learning Practitioner Name: | |
| Date of meeting with Learning Practitioner: | |
| Application prior to or after the assessment activity/deadline | Prior to <input type="checkbox"/> After <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Criteria: | Details: |
|--|--|
| ➤ <i>Details of extenuating circumstances</i> | |
| ➤ <i>Severity of circumstances</i> | |
| ➤ <i>Application from learner</i> | |
| ➤ <i>Relevant evidence/documentation</i> | |
| ➤ <i>Nature of the assessment activity</i> | |
| ➤ <i>Previous learner engagement with the programme (if applicable)</i> | |
| Application: | Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Declaration: | |
| <p>I can confirm that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A meeting with the Learning Practitioner to discuss the compassionate consideration application has taken place ➤ There is sound evidence to grant or decline the application for compassionate consideration based on criteria above ➤ If granted, the granting of compassionate consideration will not give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the assessment ➤ I will inform the learner in writing of the decision regarding compassionate consideration | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | |

COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION APPLICATION FORM

Part C: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the Programme Co-ordinator and returned to the Learner

This section should accompany relevant assessment material when submitted.

| | |
|--|--|
| Learner Name: | |
| Date of Decision: | |
| Outcome: | Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If granted, details of extended deadline etc. | |

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**Appendix 3: Appeals Application Form (Compassionate Consideration/
Assessment Deadline)**



APPEALS APPLICATION FORM

(Compassionate Consideration/Assessment Deadline)

| Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner | |
|--|--|
| Nature of Appeal: | Compassionate Consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Deadline <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Centre Name: | |
| Learner Name: | |
| Date of Application: | |
| Reason for Appeal: | |
| Reason why decision was declined: | |
| Details of supporting evidence provided: | |
| Date of Application: | |

| Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the relevant line manager | |
|---|---|
| Name: | |
| Receipt date of application: | |
| Application: | I can confirm that a review of the Application has been completed and that the Appeal is: Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reason: | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | |